

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Status of Claims:

Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11 are currently being cancelled.

Claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 are currently being amended.

No claims are currently being added.

This amendment amends and cancels claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 are now pending in this application.

Request for Entry of After-final Amendment and Reply:

It is respectfully requested that this after-final Amendment and Reply be considered and entered, since it is believed to place this application in condition for allowance without requiring further consideration and/or search.

Indication of Allowable Subject Matter:

Applicants appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter made in the Office Action with respect to claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12. By way of this amendment and reply, claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 have each been placed in independent form to include the features of their respective base claims and any intervening claims, and to make minor amendments to clarify certain claim features without substantively affecting the scope of the claims. Therefore, claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 are now believed to be in allowable form.

Claim Rejections – Prior Art:

In the Office Action, claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,764,866 to Maniwa. Due to the cancellation of claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11, this rejection is now moot.

Conclusion:

Since all of the issues raised in the Office Action have been addressed in this Amendment and Reply, Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicants hereby petition for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorize payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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